

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION:

In accordance with the foregoing, claim 58 has been cancelled and claims 1, 8, 10, and 60 have been amended. Claims 1, 8-14, 31-32, 38-54 and 59-61 are pending and under consideration. Claims 45-54 are allowed. Claims 8-9 and 60-61 are objected to.

EXAMINER INTERVIEW:

An in-person interview was conducted between the Examiner and the Applicants' representative subsequent to the mailing of the current Office Action. The participants discussed the centering mechanism of claim 1, the combination of references with respect to claim 58, and the consideration of advantages with respect to claim 59.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103:

Claim 58 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Siniaguine et al. (U.S. Patent 6,402,843) in view of Akashi (U.S. Patent 5,067,762).

The claim is cancelled herein.

Claims 1, 10, 14, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 and 44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Siniaguine et al. (U.S. Patent 6,402,843) in view of Trayes (U.S. Patent 4,009,785).

Independent claims 1 and 10 recite the centering mechanism adjusts the centering guide in a direction towards the object.

The Examiner states that the pins 70 of Trayes correspond to the claimed centering guide, and the collar 72 of this reference corresponds to the claimed centering mechanism. As set forth by the Examiner during the interview, the collar 72 of Trayes holds the pins in a stationary position so that they do not fall downwards toward the wafer 10. Since the collar 72 keeps the pins from moving toward the wafer 10, the collar 72 adjusts the pins 70 in a direction away from the wafer 10. Thus, this element does not adjust the centering guide in a direction towards the object, as claimed.

Claims 11, 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Siniaguine et al. (U.S. Patent 6,402,843) in view of Trayes (U.S. Patent 4,009,785) as applied to

claim 10 above, and further in view of Siniaguine et al. (6,099,056).

Siniaguine '056 does not overcome the above deficiencies in Siniaguine '843 and Traves.

Claim 59 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Siniaguine et al. (U.S. Patent 6,099,056).

Independent claim 59 recites the plurality of fluid swirl formation objects extending from respective surfaces of the first and second arm parts such that respective end faces are at different levels from the respective surfaces of the first and second arm parts. As set forth previously, this feature is a structural distinction over Siniaguine '056 resulting in advantages as compared to this reference. One such advantage is a more stable conveyance of the wafer. As illustrated in the attached Exhibit, this advantage is achieved because spaces into which the air can flow are reserved between fluid swirl formation objects. Consequently, turbulence resulting from direct collision of air flow from the objects can be restrained. This Exhibit was previously submitted and is attached again for the Examiner's convenience.

The Examiner's position during the interview and in the Office Action was that these advantages should not be considered in determining patentability, since the advantages were not disclosed in the original Specification. The Examiner has not supported this position with any authority. However, during the interview, the Examiner indicated willingness to consider the advantages if the Applicant could provide authority that such advantages should be considered.

The Examiner's attention is drawn to M.P.E.P. 716.02(f), which specifically states that evidence and arguments directed to advantages not disclosed in the specification cannot be disregarded. This portion of the M.P.E.P. refers to *In re Chu*, 36 USPQ2d 1089 (Fed. Cir. 1995), in which the Federal Circuit stated "the Board erred in apparently requiring Chu's evidence and arguments responsive to the obviousness rejection to be within his specification in order to be considered." *In re Chu*, 36 USPQ2d at 1094.

Thus, consideration of the advantages achieved by this structural distinction is requested. It is respectfully submitted that these advantages render this feature unobvious as compared to Siniaguine '056.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections is requested.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

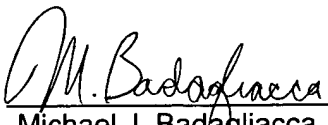
Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

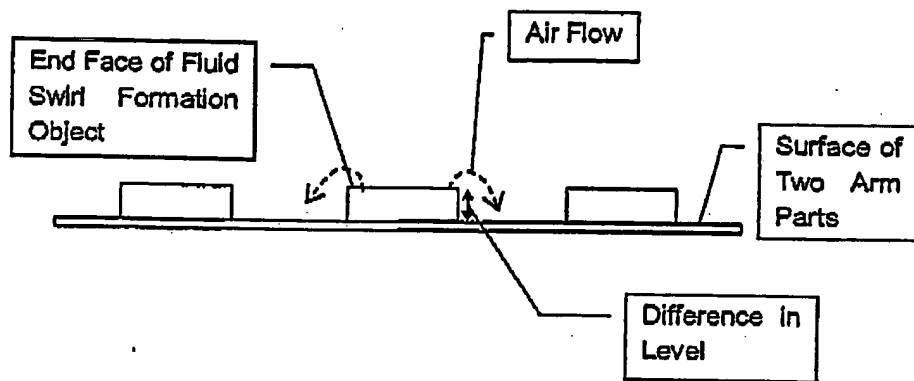
Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 4-10-06

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EXHIBIT